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## CHILD LABOR IN STREET TRADES

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BY EDWARD N. CLOPPER,

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It is gratifying to all those interested in this phase of child labor to note the gradual change in the attitude toward the child on the street. At the fifth annual conference on child labor, an impromptu meeting was held at which the subject was briefly discussed. At this present conference the subject has attained to the dignity of having a section meeting assigned for its consideration. Next year we hope a general session will be devoted to this interesting and important department of child welfare work.

The facts and figures given in the tables below are the result of efforts to accumulate and put into shape available for use, all the information concerning the work of children in the street trades that could be collected in a short time, and was of such a nature that it could be presented in tabular form.

Street trading, with reference to children, embraces not only the sale and distribution of newspapers and periodicals, but also peddling of various articles, sale of merchandise in the markets, polishing of shoes, accompanying beggars and lighting of street lamps. The messenger and delivery services, including special delivery service of the postoffice, are regulated by law in all but nineteen states; consequently, when the term "street trades" is used it is understood to include only the ordinarily unregulated trades of bootblackening, peddling and selling newspapers and periodicals. In the tables accompanying this report, all mention of messengers and delivery boys has been omitted.

The figures for New York City are now nearly three years old, and consequently not to be depended upon to represent present-day conditions; but, as the situation in that city has not changed much in the intervening time, they serve as an indication of what exists to-day. The fact that many boys under the age of ten years persistently engage in street trades in New York City, shows that the state law is not enforced there. All figures relating to New York were obtained from a leaflet setting forth the results of an

investigation undertaken by the New York Child Labor Committee, entitled "Child Labor on the Street—The Newsboy."

NEWSBOYS BY AGE GROUPS.

<i>New York City</i>		<i>Cincinnati</i>	
Young Newsboys Without Restriction September, 1906		Licenses Issued July-December, 1909	
Under 8 years	38	10 years	303
8 " "	39	11 " "	348
9 " "	75	12 " "	425
10 " "	93	13 " "	398
11 " "	175	14 " "	298
12 " "	130	Total	1772
13 " "	121		
Over 14 " "	88		
Total	759		

The following table shows the distribution of the newsboys of Cincinnati among the various grades of the schools. It is pleasing to note that all licensed newsboys under fourteen years of age are attending school.

CINCINNATI NEWSBOYS—SCHOOL GRADE

Under 14		Fourteen Years and Over	
First grade	6	Second grade	1
Second grade	50	Fourth grade	1
Third grade	210	Sixth grade	7
Fourth grade	364	Seventh grade	23
Fifth grade	359	Eighth grade	15
Sixth grade	318	High school	38
Seventh grade	241	Night school	2
Eighth grade	165	Parochial school	12
High school	39	Trade school	2
Total	1752	Business school	4
		Total	105
		Out of school—65.	

The figures given for Cincinnati were furnished by the Newsboys' Protective Association, the manager of which issues permits for street trading to children there. As the figures were compiled from the records of permits issued, no boys under the age of ten are included, as this is the minimum age limit; there are, however,

quite a few children under ten at work on Cincinnati's streets. These figures do not include bootblacks or peddlers, as the officer issuing permits learned only recently that such children also were required to be licensed. It was found that permits were being issued to Cincinnati newsboys of all ages from ten to twenty years, although the local ordinance provides for their issuance only to boys between the ages of ten and fourteen years.

The next table shows the general home condition of Cincinnati newboys. The assumption that most newsboys are unfortunate children who are obliged, because of orphanage, to support themselves by selling newspapers, is here shown to be without foundation. The fact that only 363 out of the entire number were working because their earnings were really needed by their families, is a further proof that street trading in the majority of cases is not necessary. This conclusion is supported also by the figures representing the home conditions of the boys in the Boston Suffolk School. All figures relating to Boston were secured from Mr. Philip Davis, supervisor of licensed minors for that city.

NEWSBOYS—FAMILY

	<i>Cincinnati</i>	<i>Boston</i> Suffolk School
Number under 14 with both parents dead.....	12	6
Number under 14 with father dead.....	324	25
Number under 14 with mother dead.....	69	19
Number under 14 with both parents living.....	1517	75
Number under 14 whose earnings are needed, .....	363	

Five thousand boys, 11 to 18 years old, in street trades in Boston, but no girls. They are newsboys, bootblacks, peddlers, woodpickers and food scavengers.

Italians monopolize peddling and predominate in bootblacking in Boston, while most newsboys are Jews.

NEWSBOYS—HOURS AND EARNINGS.

<i>Boston</i>	<i>Cincinnati</i>
3000 Licensed Newsboys, 11 to 14 Years Old	1752 Licensed Newsboys, 10 to 14 Years Old
65 per cent. are Jews.	60 per cent. are Americans.
20 per cent. are Italians.	20 per cent. are Germans.
10 per cent. are Irish.	9 per cent. are Jews.
5 per cent. of other nationalities.	6 per cent. are Irish.
Average daily earnings, 25 cents.	5 per cent. of other nationalities.
Average hours daily for all news- boys, 5.	Average daily earnings, 35 cents.
	Hours on school days, 3.
	Hours on holidays, 4.

All the arguments that could be found concerning the evil effects of street trading upon children have been collected and divided into three groups, under the headings of physical, moral and material deterioration. It must be understood that this indictment represents an extremely one-sided view, and that while the influences of the street are unquestionably bad, most children exposed to them are not likely to suffer to the extent suggested below. However, the mere fact that such effects are noted in some cases is sufficient to justify such regulation as will protect all children as much as possible from these evil influences.

#### EFFECTS OF STREET TRADING ON CHILDREN

<i>Physical Deterioration</i>	{	Night work.
		Excessive fatigue.
		Exposure to bad weather.
		Irregularity of sleep and meals.
		Use of stimulants, cigarettes, coffee, liquor.
		Disease through contact with vices.
<i>Moral Deterioration</i>	{	Encouragement to truancy.
		Independence and defiance of parental control.
		Weakness cultivated by formation of bad habits.
		Form liking for petty excitements of street.
<i>Material Deterioration</i>	{	Opportunities to become delinquent.
		Large percentage of recruits to criminal population.
		Form distaste for regular employment.
		Small chance of acquiring a trade.
		Drift into large class of casual workers.

#### NEW YORK STREET TRADERS IN INSTITUTIONS

September, 1906

Hart's Island Reformatory—63 per cent. were newsboys.

Catholic Protectory—40 per cent. were newsboys.

House of Refuge { 30 per cent. of younger boys were newsboys.

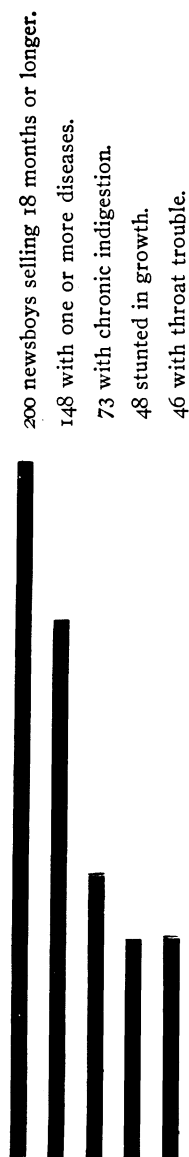
Randall's Island { 70 per cent. of older boys were newsboys.

Of 560 in reformatories, 32 per cent. were newsboys before they were 10 years old.

Of 527 in reformatories, 35 per cent. sold all night when newsboys.

EFFECTS OF STREET TRADING

*New York City—September, 1906*



*Brooklyn—September, 1906*



*Boston Suffolk School*



Of the 108 in the Boston Suffolk School—

82 were newsboys.

21 were peddlers.

4 were bootblacks.

1 was an errand boy.

All were under 16 years.

On street daily from 2 to 8 hours.

Average daily earnings were 27 cents.

1 was an errand boy.

Average number of children in family, 4.

Maximum number of children in family, 16.

*New York City—September, 1906*

Of 300 newsboys who have formed habit of smoking, 4 were 6 years old, 3 were 7 years old, 6 were 8 years old, 18 were 9 to 10 years old, 269 were 11 to 15 years old.

*Boston Juvenile Court*

Total number of cases, September, 1906, to September, 1908..... 2370

Total number of street-trade cases..... 268

Percentage of street traders..... 11.3

Of the 268 delinquent children, 60 per cent. were Jews, 20 per cent. Italians, 20 per cent. of other nationalities, 208 were newsboys, 36 bootblacks, 24 peddlers.

It is difficult in this country to study the effect of regulation upon street trading children, as such regulation is confined to the states of New York, Massachusetts and Wisconsin, the District of Columbia and the cities of Cincinnati, O., and Newark, N. J. Moreover, these regulations have been in force here for only a short period of time. In England, however, there has been municipal regulation, authorized by Parliament, since 1903, and in Liverpool, since 1884. Hence, the effects of this regulation upon the boys and girls of English cities are important as bearing upon the whole question of its advisability. In England the enforcement of local provisions regulating street trading is entrusted to a division of the police, known as the "Watch Committee." The licensing of the children is in charge of a police officer; this officer and his deputies, who are plain-clothes men, constitute what is known as the street trading department of the police office. It is the duty of these men, not only to issue licenses and to regulate the commercial activities of children on the street, but also to visit the children in their homes and to get information concerning the conditions under which they live.

It is quite interesting to learn that this system has worked very satisfactorily in England. In the United States, wherever the enforcement of such regulation has been entrusted to the police, the results have been far from satisfactory. The reason for this is undoubtedly that the matter has been turned over to the entire police force, and not to a few officers especially detailed for the work.

*Effects of Regulation in Liverpool*

Lessened number of child traders on streets.

Lessened number of licensed children.

Improved appearance and behavior of those still trading.

In half-year covered by last report, no licensed girl was charged with indecent conduct, though formerly such charges were common. Of 68 boys committed to reformatories, only 2 were licensed, and of 583 boys sent to industrial schools, only 6 were licensed.

*Newcastle*

Cleared streets of juvenile beggars.

Stopped street trading by girls under 16 years.

Prevents children from frequenting saloons.

*Birmingham*

Before Passage of Act of 1903

Of 713 children in street trades, 458 were prosecuted in 6 months—185 of them for gambling and 115 for felony.

After Regulation by Licensing

In the single year of 1907 the number of children in street trades decreased 500.

*Street-trading Children Under 16 Years in Leeds, England*

1905, No Licenses Issued

Selling papers—753 boys, 6 girls.

Selling matches—24 boys, 10 girls.

Selling vegetables—16 boys, 1 girl.

Selling fruit—9 boys, 2 girls.

Selling miscellaneous articles—46 boys, 15 girls.

Total, 882.

In the following table is given a summary of the enforceable laws and ordinances relating to the work of children in street trades, effective at present in this country.



## LAWS AND ORDINANCES.

Age Limit.	Licenses.	Hours.	Enforcement.	Penalty.
New York. . . . . <div> <div>Boys 10.</div> <div>Girls 16.</div> <div>Publications.</div> </div>	Boys 10-14.	6 a. m. 10 p. m.	Police and truant officers.	Dealt with according to law.
District of Co- lumbia. . . . . <div> <div>Boys 10.</div> <div>Girls 16.</div> <div>Bootblackening, selling anything.</div> </div>	Boys 10-16.	6 a. m. 10 p. m.	Factory inspectors.	Discretion of Juvenile Court.
Cincinnati. . . . . <div> <div>Boys 10.</div> <div>Girls 16.</div> <div>Bootblackening, and selling any- thing.</div> </div>	Boys 10-14.	6 a. m. 8 p. m.	Police, truant and probation officers.	Delinquency fine, \$1.00-\$5.00.
Wisconsin. . . . . <div> <div>Boys 10.</div> <div>Girls 16.</div> <div>Publications.</div> <div>Boys 12.</div> <div>Girls 16.</div> <div>All others.</div> </div>	Boys 10-14.	6 a. m.-10 p. m. Publications. 7 a. m.-7 p. m. All others.	Police, truant and probation officers and factory inspectors.	\$25-\$100 fine or imprisonment 10-60 days for newspaper offices for allowing newsboys about office between 9 a. m. and 3 p. m.
Massachusetts. . . . . <div> <div>School committees of cities may make regulations of boot- blackening and sale of newspapers, merchandise, etc.; may prohibit such sale or trades; or may require license to be obtained from them by persons under 14 years.</div> </div>				\$10 fine for child (max.), \$200 or imprisonment 6 months (max.), for parent allowing child under 15 years to peddle without license if required.